

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 975

By Sontany

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Rhonda Clark upon her receipt of the 2006 ATHENA celebration scholarship for a non-traditional student.

WHEREAS, this General Assembly welcomes the opportunity to support gender equity in all facets of society and commends individuals and organizations that work to create leadership opportunities for women, thus permitting society to benefit from the particular characteristics and qualities that women bring to leadership roles in business, government, the arts and sciences, or any other realm of human endeavor; and

WHEREAS, the ATHENA Foundation is one such dynamic organization, which, since 1982, has worked with hundreds of communities to encourage and acknowledge women in leadership positions; the ATHENA Award program inspires the achievement of professional excellence by honoring outstanding women leaders; and

WHEREAS, the ATHENA Award Program provides scholarships for graduating high school seniors and nontraditional students returning to further their education; this year's recipient of the Nashville ATHENA scholarship for a non-traditional student, Rhonda Clark, is an estimable woman who evinces the qualities of courage, strength, wisdom, and harmony; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Clark was born prematurely with cerebral palsy and was not expected to live past the age of one; her maternal grandparents assured her that anything was possible, nurtured her self-confidence, and reminded her that she was the only person who could triumph over her own particular obstacles; and

WHEREAS, Rhonda Clark has been living independently since she was a senior in high school; after college she moved from Green Bay, Wisconsin to Nashville to pursue a career in the music industry, and after many years of self-discovery and following her dream, Ms. Clark now works in the music industry; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Clark was taught the art of independence by a physical therapist whose influence on and belief in Ms. Clark left a powerful and enduring impression; Rhonda Clark's current objective is to enter the medical field, so that she may one day help others as she has been helped; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Clark is currently enrolled at Nashville State Technical Community College and is studying Anatomy and Physiology in the pursuit of a medical certificate; and

WHEREAS, the ATHENA celebration scholarship for a non-traditional student will be awarded to Rhonda Clark on March 30, 2006; with the help of the scholarship, she plans to achieve her current educational goals, and, ultimately, create a foundation designed to assist physically disabled people who are without insurance and other basic human needs; the ATHENA scholarship is a wonderful beginning, not only for Rhonda Clark, but for all of those whom she intends to help; and

WHEREAS, Rhonda Clark's intention is to create a fund that can be accessed through an application process to provide assistance with financial aid and advocacy; she plans to serve as an advocate for physically disabled people by helping them navigate the maze of agencies, health care providers, resources, and companies who provide the items and services necessary for independent living; and

WHEREAS, the ATHENA Leadership Model calls for a celebration of the vitality, robustness, and possibilities of life, which allow a sense of pleasure in work and accomplishments; Rhonda Clark has certainly proven to be worthy of this distinguished honor; and

WHEREAS, wholly committed to the noble precepts of public service that have earned Tennessee fame as the "Volunteer State," Ms. Rhonda Clark should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor and commend Rhonda Clark, a woman of great integrity, ability, and compassion, congratulate her upon her receipt of the 2006 ATHENA celebration

scholarship for a non-traditional student, and extend to her our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.